

**UNIVERSITY OF TARTU**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**THE USE OF WEB-BASED LEARNING AMONG ENGLISH  
TEACHERS IN ESTONIA**

**MA thesis**

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## ABSTRACT

In this paper I explore the teaching methods and ideas connected to web-based learning. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the century of technology it is highly recommended to use computers as a learning instrument and source. In addition to that I believe the teacher's job is to offer students variety in his/ her subject by using different kind of tasks and activities. Web-based learning equips teachers with loads of materials to do that.

The aim of the master's theses is to find out if, how much and what kind of web-based sources English teachers in Estonia use to make learning a language varied and exciting for the students. It is always good to share and learn from each other's experience. The concept of the questionnaire and the interviews is to make teachers think about their teaching methodology and motivate them to use the options of the Internet more. The outcome of this research is a list of Internet sources the teachers in Estonia can use for teaching English as a second language.

In the first part of the paper there is an overview of web-based learning in general, the definition and benefits of web-based learning. The next part focuses on research methodology, the questionnaire and the list of questions used in interviewing some teachers is included as an appendix, and lastly, the results which should encourage teachers use more web-based learning for language learning purpose.

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## INTRODUCTION

As E-learning is getting more and more popular and I am quite interested in computer-based learning in English, I thought of studying this topic. We are living in the age of technology and I think it is important to integrate information technology into our lessons. It is possible to use computers with or without Internet connection; either way there are many things to work on. The Internet provides us with all kinds of information and lots of sources we can use to teach and learn English.

Traditional teaching methods are becoming more and more ineffective and out-of-date, therefore, it is significant for the teachers to school themselves and keep abreast of the times. Teachers can use computers during their lessons or give home tasks that involve computer (web)-based learning. Using the Internet - web-based learning makes lessons more varied and interesting.

But do the teachers in Estonia use the opportunities the Internet offers us?

My research questions would be:

How much do the English teachers in Estonia use web-based learning and what kind of web-based activities (tasks) do the English teachers in Estonia give to their students?

The purpose of my research study is to review web-based learning while learning English and to give some information about the Internet pages the Estonian teachers of English use in their lessons. In addition, as I have conducted a long-term research it is interesting to know whether the use of the Internet resources has increased over the years or not. I am comparing the years 2012, 2014 and 2016. Furthermore, some interviews are carried out to go more in details.

Firstly, in the literature review I concentrate on the ideas that people have said about web-based learning and why they find it significant to integrate into teaching process. I have also picked out some definitions to explain the term of web-based learning.

Secondly, I explain why web-based activities are valuable to the students and why language teachers should integrate Web resources into the language classroom. I point out several activities and tools that help teachers to facilitate the language learning process; furthermore, I mention what kind of skills can be practiced through these activities. There is also a paragraph about students' opinion about web-based language learning.

Next I explain the research I conducted by analysing questionnaires and interviews and lastly, draw some conclusions and make a list of web-pages the Estonian teachers of English have used in their lessons or as homework.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Past five years have proven to be the age of new trends that has brought along many changes, first of all the rapid development of information technology (Chou 2013) and secondly, several changes in Estonian national curriculum, for example, integration, individual approach etc, that all refer to the new teaching styles and strategies.

Estonian national curriculum indicates that the education system should prepare students to get by in the world of technology, as well teaching methods, study materials and teaching equipment should be contemporary and diverse. Furthermore, Estonian national curriculum even sets the requirements on the physical environment in basic schools: computers with Internet connection and presentation equipment, in addition to that the regulation points out the significance of computers as work tools and as means of communication and information seeking in foreign language learning (Government of the Republic 2011 – General provisions of national curriculum for basic schools).

Mei-Ju Chou (2013) specifies that school education is facing the age of transition and transformation; she also adds that education now strongly encourages active learning, not just sitting behind textbooks and workbooks. Jolliffe et al (2012) refer to our times as a digital revolution and state: “this digital revolution will bring together many, if not all, forms of communication, including learning”. They speak about the World Wide Web (the Web) as a tool that offers endless possibilities and that can be used as a learning system.

Today, internet is as important part of our lives as English. For this reason, it can be said that learning via internet is one way to learn English (Çavuş, Sarica 2008). The development of network technology provides various conditions and support for students' independent learning ability. Network provides students with a variety of choices, and

students can make use of network resources according to their own needs (Nadire, Nagehan 2008).

As an increasingly powerful, interactive, and dynamic medium for delivering information, the Web in combination with information technology has found many applications. Khan (1997) has assured that the use of the Web as an educational tool has provided learners and educators with a wider range of new and interesting learning experiences and teaching environments, not possible in traditional in-class education (Nam, Smith-Jackson 2007). Likewise, Jolliffe et al (2012) motivate to use the potential of the Net “to deliver learning materials to learners of all kinds, in all kinds of different places and at all kinds of different times”. Teachers should take full advantage of the network resources, enrich classroom teaching and arouse students’ enthusiasm for studying.

Wijekumar (2005) makes a point that web-based learning environments can serve as motivational, instructional, modelling, feedback, and assessment tools. However, she also points out that Web-based learning environments can be powerful but their potential is sometimes limited as materials differ greatly in quality. Jolliffe et al (2012) state basically the same and warn not to get too excited by the many resources available on the Net as not all of them equate to an effective learning environment. So, teachers have to be careful while looking for materials, tasks, sources etc for their students.

### ***What is web-based learning?***

First of all the notion of e-learning should be explained, as it is a broader term and it is not only associated with computers but also with smart phones. The webpage named elearningNC gives the following description of e-learning: it is learning connected with the use of electronic technologies to access educational curriculum in a more engaging and

innovative way. Chen et al (2016) outline that “e-learning involves the transmission of teaching content through the Internet”.

E-learning can be divided into computer-based learning and web-based learning, and learning can be self-paced or instructor-led. Clark and Mayer (2008) suggest the aim of e-learning – it is designed to support individual learning or organisational performance goals.

As web-based learning involves immeasurable amount of methods and technologies, Jolliffe et al (2012) claim that it is rather difficult to give an exact definition to web-based learning. Generally, web-based learning is referred to as “the delivery of and access to a co-ordinated collection of learning materials over an electronic medium using a Web server to deliver the materials”.

Nadire and Nagehan (2008) explain that web-based learning is a general term used to refer to computer-enhanced learning. Machado and Tsai (2001-2011) determine the web-based learning to be associated with learning materials delivered in a Web browser. Son (2008) defines web-based learning as language learning that involves the use of the Web and exploits Web materials, resources, applications or tools. Numerous web sites provide digital educational activities and network based courses for all grade levels in a large number of subjects (Çavuş, Sarica 2008).

Web-based learning can include a diverse set of methods and technologies (Jolliffe et al 2012). Students can use the Internet for collecting information and sharing it with others, accessing interactive exercises to practice or apply the material presented, doing Internet projects, playing educational games. There are also grammars, dictionaries as well as audio files for the improvement of listening comprehension, etc. The number of interactive online language learning materials on the net is growing day by day.

There are several advantages of Web Based Language Learning, for example, it provides a comfortable learning environment, encourages more independent

(individualized) and active learning and can equip teachers with a useful source of supplementary materials to conventional programs. Çavuş and Sarica (2008) also stress that web-based learning allows students and teachers for flexibility of access, from anywhere and usually at anytime, essentially, it allows participants to collapse time and space. However, they also mention that the learning materials must be designed properly, with the learners and learning in focus, to engage the learner and promote learning, in addition adequate support must always be provided (Çavuş, Sarica 2008).

### ***Teaching English through web-based learning/ web-based English language learning***

The power of web has greatly influenced language learning by allowing learners to explore and discover their learning paths themselves and offering them easy access to an on-line database of resources (Son 2008).

Abrizah et al (2015) emphasize that due to the increased tendency toward learners' digital literacy, web-based learning resources as pedagogical tools are becoming more and more significant in classroom instruction.

Learning through internet is an alternative and useful way to learn English. Numerous websites provide a great deal of educational resources, activities to teach or learn English. Internet materials cover a wide variety of themes such as cultures, science, current affairs, media, music, education etc. Son (2008) even calls web "a virtual library" that has a huge amount of information valuable to English as a second language teaching.

There are learning tools for in-class teaching, self-learning (practice or some additional support) or just revision and there are many websites that include games, online

exercises and dictionaries, worksheets, high quality video materials, reading and writing tasks etc to strengthen students' language competence.

Students can practice their four basic skills on the Internet: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Çavuş and Sarıca (2008) confirm that web-mediated communication is a powerful interaction medium. For instance, pen friends or native speakers can be found in order to practice speaking and writing with them (e-mails). Internet communication tools such as chatting programs: messenger, Skype (videoconferencing) etc can be used to communicate with peers and teachers.

Çavuş and Sarıca (2008) also point out that there are free grammars, dictionaries and audio files for the improvement of listening comprehension, etc readily available. Students can access sound and video and record their voices and compare their pronunciation with classmates or of a native speaker.

Web-based language learning lessons are generally designed to guide students through information or to help students perform in specific (for example, problem-solving) tasks. These can be called task-based web activities where students have to produce certain outcomes. There are a number of encyclopaedias and other authentic resources of the Web to help the students to find necessary information. Students are also expected to make (PowerPoint) presentations and share their findings, exchange their ideas or information.

Reading is an important part of language learning. If students read a lot they can understand everything and comment on a subject easily.

Students can learn grammar and/or vocabulary from the web, as an example, interactive learning games are found frequently (Çavuş, Sarıca 2008). Son (2008) remarks that by incorporating language games such as crosswords, word searches and quizzes, students can practice and test practical skills with fun as an extension of learning activities.

There are many pre-created Web activities for grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening on the Internet many of which are teacher-made, created by using, for example, Hot Potatoes, which is a free program for educational use and enables to compile interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises (Son 2008). Today many language teachers create their own online interactive exercises and quite many English teachers have made their own web pages and/or keep blogs.

### ***Teachers' and students' aspect and web-based language learning***

In recent years, students have the opportunity to learn English on their own by using the web. Son (2008) has carried out several studies of ESL students' opinions on the usefulness of web-based language learning and to ask students' opinion about web-based learning. To sum up, students enjoyed the learning process and at the same time learned a lot. No doubt that web-based learning is diverse and innovative; it improves learners' motivation and maximizes learning effects.

This fact should be taken into account by teachers because new technologies and changing learning styles are forcing teachers to change their teaching styles. Sultana and Vijayakumar (2015) assert that the use of web-based tools and internet resources depends greatly on teacher's attitude towards technology.

Teachers should use the benefits of web in order to make lessons more enjoyable and varied. However, as web pages differ greatly in quality, the learning materials must be picked out carefully. Teachers have to select, organize and schedule the contents according to their school-based as well as personal teaching schedules for their own in-class as well as out-of class teaching and learning.

In addition, selected activities should be active and engaging. Interactive multimedia resources usually provide a stimulating and motivating environment for teachers' in-class activities and students self-regulated learning at home.

Furthermore, teachers should ensure that the learning environment provided takes account of learners' needs and level. As teachers usually have students of different levels and with different abilities in their class they have to adjust their methodology and teaching styles accordingly to fulfil diverse learning needs and create the positive and supportive learning environment. Teachers should help the self development of the students and encourage them to take responsibility with their guidance.

To conclude, teachers who have the skills to use the technology can take this opportunity to show their proficiency in integrating the technology into their English lessons, to maximize language learning and to motivate students.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of the present master's thesis are as follows: How much do the English teachers in Estonia use web-based learning and what kind of web-based activities (tasks) do the English teachers in Estonia give to their students?

## METHODS

For the purpose of this research and to achieve the objectives, data was collected. The empirical study used both a quantitative and a qualitative research method. Firstly, I designed a questionnaire for the Estonian teachers of English to present the general overview of technical equipment available in schools and to see how often teachers use web-based learning and what kind of tasks and sources are used in lessons to teach English.

The questionnaire was created, uploaded and shared with Google Docs application. It consisted of 17 questions (both open and closed questions) and is included as an appendix (Appendix 1).

As it seemed interesting to explore whether and how much time changes teachers' views and the use of web-based learning I planned a long-term research and repeated the research in 2012, 2014 and 2016 and accordingly got 91, 63 and 135 responses to my questionnaire.

I have many former and present course mates who work as English teachers all over Estonia and I sent them the link to my questionnaire by email, in addition, I sent the request for help into various lists of English teachers. At this point I should mention that it is rather difficult to reach English teachers in different counties and towns as I cannot post letters to their lists myself. I also asked for Allecto's (dealer of books and English teaching

materials) and Pearson's (publishing and education company) help to spread my letter in their mailing lists (the first time, in 2014, they did not do it and the second time, in 2016, they did). As it is rather difficult to get back the questionnaires, as people nowadays are always busy, I had an idea to motivate teachers to help me with the hand-out of links/ ideas that I could compile for them (and later send by email) after I have finished my research.

Secondly, some interviews (Appendix 2) were carried out, more specifically five English teachers from schools in Tartu. The teachers were chosen amongst my friends, colleagues and one of the teachers was my former university companion. The interviews qualify as a qualitative research as the objective was to go more in detail with the topic of web-based learning and learn about English teachers thoughts about it, so the questionnaire followed by the interviews that give an in-depth picture exploring the questions how and why.

After collecting information I analysed, compared, described and summarized the data. The aim of my research was to make conclusions about the use of web-based learning in English classes in Estonia. From this research I hoped to get some new and good ideas for my work and I did.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### *Data analysis*

Firstly, questionnaires are analyzed. As mentioned before Google Docs was used to create a form. Google Docs also collects responses and represents the data in charts that makes it rather easy and convenient to use.

The first part of data analysis is followed by the discussion of interviews. The questions asked during the interview were pre-prepared, though it was not planned to stick strictly to them. The answers of the interviewees were put down on paper by the interviewer and later the results were analyzed.

### *The questionnaire*

Mainly the responses from year 2016 are concentrated on and analysed, in more general questions, and what concerns the concrete topic of the thesis several comparisons are made with the results of the previous years.

Question number 1 asked about the responder's gender. In 2016 all the teachers who participated in the survey were female but in 2014 one male (2.2%) and in 2012 (1.6%) two male respondents were included. The numbers indicate that there are not many male English teachers in Estonia but it is also possible that men are not very eager to fill in different questionnaires.

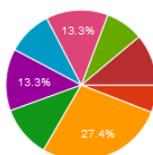
The age of the teachers was demonstrated in question number 2. The teachers who replied to the questionnaire were from different age groups. The biggest percentage of

teachers was aged from 31 to 35; the other percentages varied and depended on the year the survey was conducted.

For example, in 2016:

**Chart 1. The age of the respondent teachers in 2016**

2. How old are you?



21-25 years old	0	0%
26-30 years old	8	5.9%
31-35 years old	37	27.4%
36-40 years old	15	11.1%
41-45 years old	18	13.3%
46-50 years old	13	9.6%
51-55 years old	18	13.3%
56-60 years old	11	8.1%
61-65 years old	15	11.1%

Question number 3 examined the working experience of English teachers in Estonia. The working experience ranged from 1 year to 45 years, no big difference while comparing the results in 2012, 2014 and 2016.

The next question (4) specified the school where the respondent worked in. The schools were from all over Estonia: vocational schools, gymnasiums, secondary schools, basic schools, elementary schools (2%) – small country schools and well-known metropolitan schools, public schools and private schools. The number of students in the schools (question number 5) fluctuated from 19 students to 3500 (Tartu Vocational Education Centre). Quite large amount of the teachers were from secondary schools (2016 – 70%, 2014 32% and 2012 – 49%), about 25-26% of the responders clearly noted themselves to be basic school teachers (some schools were named as just “school” and it is not clear if these are basic schools or elementary schools).

Question number 6 aimed at finding out in what grades the teachers teach and whether the use of web-based sources depends on the age of students. While concentrating on the year 2016, over 13% of the teachers teach only secondary school students, about

23% are basic school and secondary school teachers, 10% of the teachers work with the students from grades 1-6 and 50% of the respondents claimed themselves to be primary and basic school teachers. The remaining 4% - 5 teachers pointed out that they either teach different vocational school levels, business English, courses from 1 to 3, adults or students with special needs.

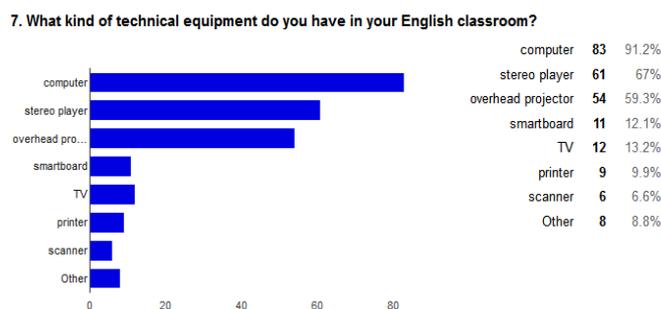
The question (7) of technical equipment in English classrooms followed. While comparing charts 2, 3 and 4 several differences can be seen. The percentages of computers in English classrooms are quite similar (91.2%, 96.8% and 97%), though a small growth of number can be noticed and totally understood as nowadays it is rather impossible for a teacher to work without a computer.

The next in order of importance or that also has huge percentages in the charts, is the overhead projector. As teaching materials are becoming more and more digital and teachers are trying to use technical devices as much as possible year by year the use of overhead projectors has grown – from 59.3% to 83.7%.

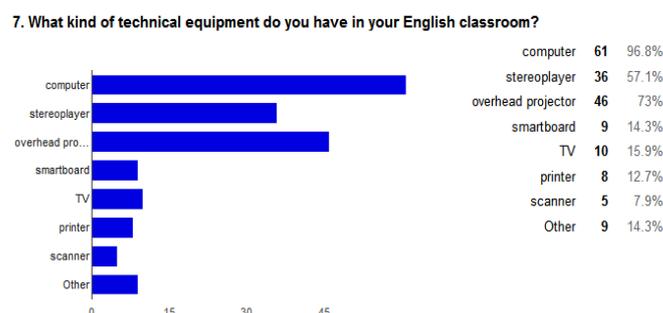
The number of stereo players, TVs, scanners and printers in English classrooms has gone up and down but no big changes actually. At the same time smart boards have become widely popular year after year, increasing from 12.1% in 2012 to 20.7% in 2016.

Finally the option “Other” turned to be rather popular and the percentage there has grown more than half, from 8.8% 19.3%. It is realistic to assume that among this “Other” can be, for example, tablets, laptops, mobile phones etc.

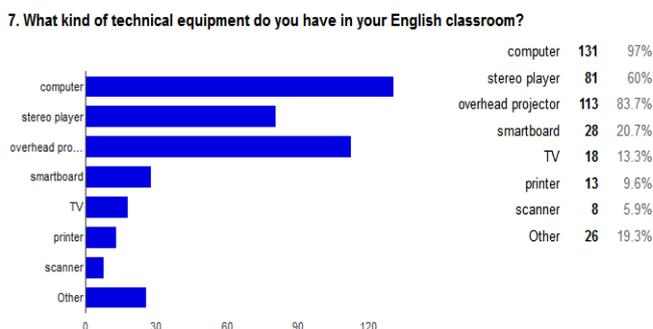
**Chart 2. Technical equipment in English classrooms in 2012**



**Chart 3. Technical equipment in English classrooms in 2014**



**Chart 4. Technical equipment in English classrooms in 2016**

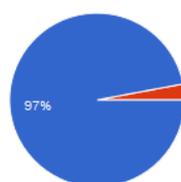


The next question in line (8) is about computer classrooms in schools. The pie chart below shows that most schools in Estonia have computer classrooms but there are still some schools that have not got one (2014, 2016). In 2012 all the teachers who replied to the questionnaire had computer classrooms in their schools and in 2014 only one respondent did not have the computer classroom in one's school.

The schools that do not have computer classroom are small schools, mostly county schools where about 100 students learn but amongst these 4 schools with no computer classrooms are two relatively bigger schools too, with students of 300 and 500, which is rather surprising. Presumably these schools have some other technical devices (for instance, tablets or laptops) to use in their schools and they do not need a specific classroom to use them.

### Chart 5. *Computer classrooms in schools in 2016*

8. Do you have computer classrooms in your school?



yes	131	97%
no	4	3%

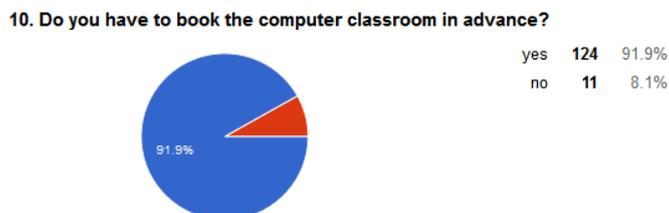
Question number 9 explains how many computer classrooms are there in different Estonian schools. In 2016 and 2012 almost half of the schools where the respondents work have one computer classroom per school and one third have two (inexplicably, in 2014 these numbers are reverse); several bigger schools have three computer classrooms or more. It seems that the number of classrooms in schools depends on the size of the school, more precisely, on the total of students in schools.

In addition to computer classrooms so called moving classroom were mentioned a couple of times which means that besides stationary computer classrooms schools have sets of tablets and laptops to use and year by year their number increases.

The next question (10) examines whether teachers should book the computer classrooms in advance. The answers clearly state that they had to (93.7%, 94.5%) and have to as the chart 6 shows. In 2016 the percentage has a bit fallen as schools possess more and

more technical devices and teachers can choose whether they have their lessons in computer classroom or lend laptops or tablets to work in their own classroom.

**Chart 6. Booking computer classrooms in advance (2016)**



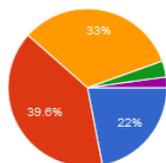
Relatively much in the lessons depends on the technical equipment a teacher has in one's classroom but teaching methods and teaching styles also play a crucial role in what happens in the lessons. Teacher's pedagogy, general principles and management strategies determine a great deal and it is important to note that these aspects may change over time.

Question number 11 clearly demonstrates the considerable changes that have occurred during the past years, from 2012 to 2016. The proliferation of web-based technologies has also affected the use of web-based sources in schools. The option "quite often" has almost doubled during these five years and the answer "occasionally" is also rather popular and on the increase, though there is a slight decline in number while comparing the latter in 2014 and 2016 (from 47.6% to 43%).

Time has made its corrections and innovations and after the half of the decade less teachers use web-based learning seldom, but at the same time there are still some teachers who never use the options the web offers and they give reasons as follows, for example, students already spend too much time on the Internet anyway or the computers they have for use are old and slow or web-based learning is more like passive learning.

**Chart 7. The use of web-based learning with students in English lessons (2012)**

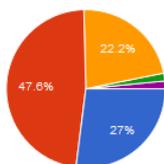
11. How often do you use web-based learning with your students in your English lessons?



quite often	20	22%
occasionally	36	39.6%
seldom	30	33%
never	3	3.3%
Other	2	2.2%

**Chart 8. The use of web-based learning with students in English lessons (2014)**

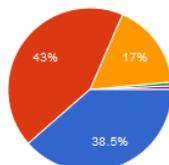
11. How often do you use web-based learning with your students in your English lessons?



quite often	17	27%
occasionally	30	47.6%
seldom	14	22.2%
never	1	1.6%
Other	1	1.6%

**Chart 9. The use of web-based learning with students in English lessons (2016)**

11. How often do you use web-based learning with your students in your English lessons?



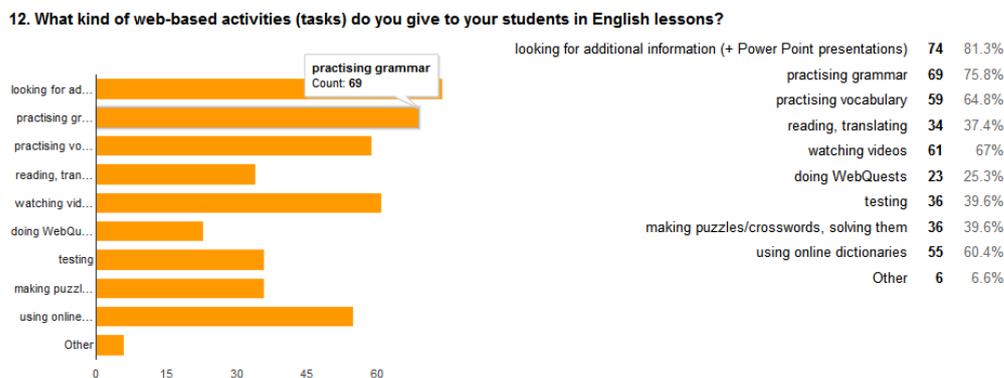
quite often	52	38.5%
occasionally	58	43%
seldom	23	17%
never	1	0.7%
Other	1	0.7%

Question number 12 specifies what kind of web-based activities teachers give to their students in English lessons. The most frequently teachers ask their students to find additional information on the Internet and afterwards students are expected to make PowerPoint presentations. The second favoured activity in English classes is watching educative videos and thirdly, grammar practice is of great importance. 71.1% of teachers think that students have to be able to use online dictionaries and quite a huge percentage belongs to vocabulary practice which is actually the base of learning a language.

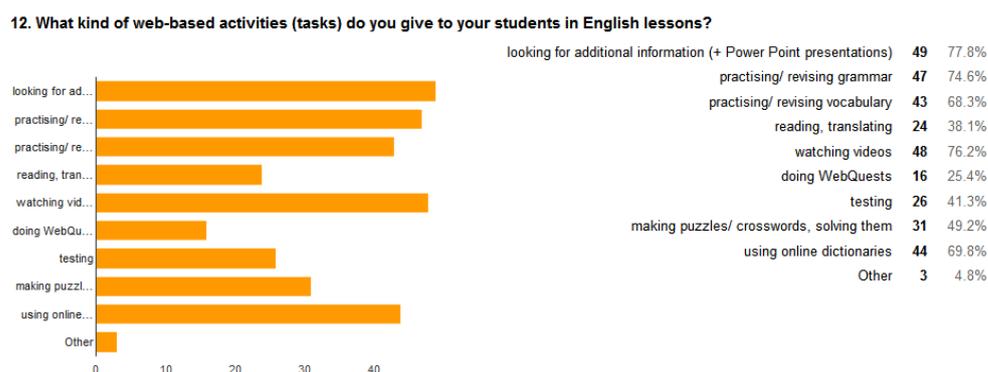
Puzzle/ crossword making and solving, testing and reading, translating have slightly smaller percentages and also web-quests are not that preferred anymore. While

comparing the charts in different years there are no big differences. The bar graphs below conclusively demonstrate the popularity of various activities offered in the questionnaire.

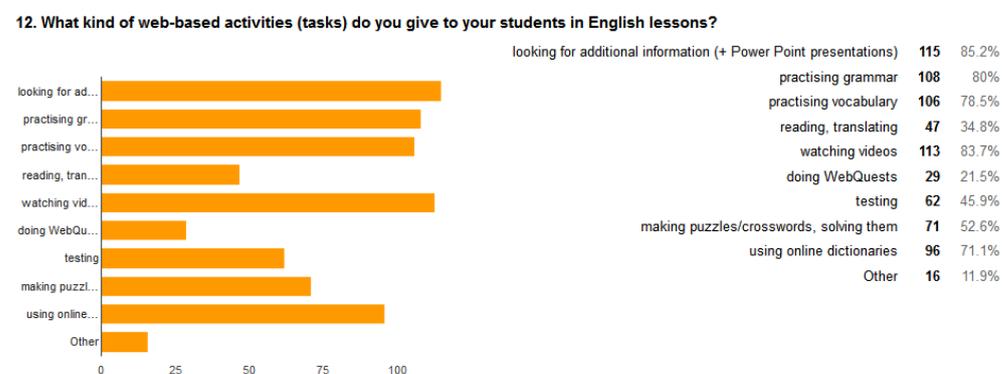
**Chart 10. Web-based activities/ tasks given to students in English lessons (2012)**



**Chart 11. Web-based activities/ tasks given to students in English lessons (2014)**



**Chart 12. Web-based activities/ tasks given to students in English lessons (2016)**



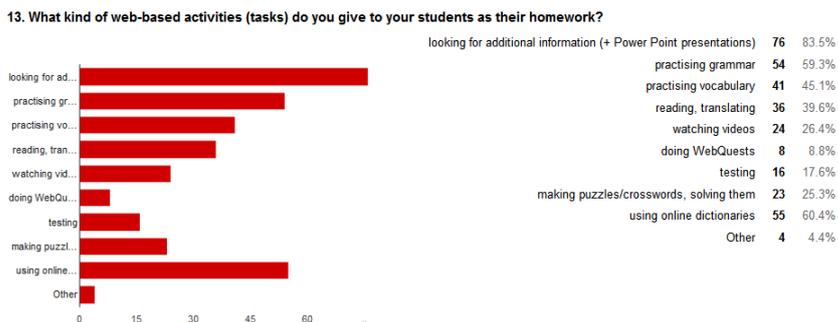
While acquiring education a crucial amount of studying is done at school but a great deal has to be done independently at home too. Homework assignments are important for students' academic success and homework develops several students' personal skills, as well it gives students the possibility to review and anchor knowledge learned at school.

Question number 13 observes what kind of web-based tasks English teachers in Estonia give to their students as homework. As previously stated, looking for information on the Internet and making PowerPoint presentations in English lessons are extremely widely used tasks by English teachers. The same situation is with homework, we cannot get round the fact that seeking for extra information about the topics broadens students' horizons and teachers find it fairly important (from 2012 to 2016, on average 83% of teachers also give this task to their students as homework).

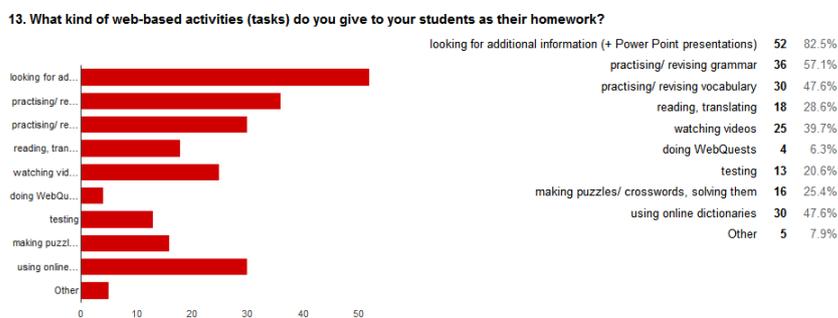
Secondarily teachers place great importance on grammar and vocabulary practice, the latter has become more relevant year by year, the percentage rising from 45.1% in 2012 to 59.6% in 2016. In addition to revising grammar rules and phrases or words teachers let their students to look the words up in online dictionaries; the latter are important tools for learning a language. At the same time much reading and translating is done in English lessons and the charts show that illustrative materials (watching videos) are also significant in a language lesson.

Puzzles and crosswords are not so often done by students (neither in lessons nor as homework), most probably teachers themselves try to find some and give them to solve from time to time. The smallest percentages in the charts belong to testing and WebGuests, the reasons unknown. While discussing the percentages in general in the charts 13, 14 and 15 the bar graphs show much fluctuation which is somewhat surprising though.

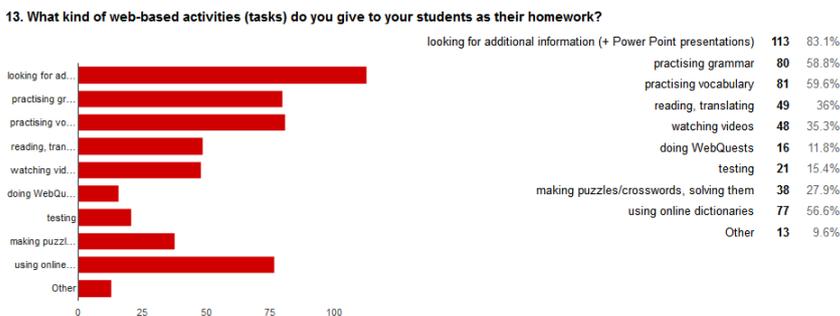
**Chart 13. Web-based activities/ tasks given to students as homework (2012)**



**Chart 14. Web-based activities/ tasks given to students as homework (2014)**



**Chart 15. Web-based activities/ tasks given to students as homework (2016)**



In the next question (14) many respondent teachers emphasize the importance of four basic language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing). The skills need to be developed all the time and majority of the teachers incorporate activities to all these four skills.

Some teachers mentioned only these skills or wrote merely a couple of words for an answer to this question but some were more precise and put down several sentences which gave a more detailed view and a clearer understanding what the teachers expect their students to learn or practice while working online in English lessons.

In general, quite a number of teachers mention the aspect that students need to learn to use modern ICT (information and computer technology) devices to their real purpose, not only for playing. Thus schools have to provide learners with basic skills how to use tablets, smart phones and computers. Furthermore, teachers highlight that students have to recognize the web as study equipment and use many different sources for learning: not only boring textbooks, but also some interesting activities.

Several teachers refer that students ought to have fun and enjoy the language learning process. One respondent specifies that in the computer classrooms students are supposed to learn as usual but do it in the environment where they feel most comfortable - the Internet, this way learning is more interesting and attractive to them.

There is another aspect that teachers draw attention, besides the skill to use technology in their learning students learn to work on their own, to become independent learners, plan their time etc or, on the contrary, students practice teamwork which is also a significant part of studying and getting by in life. To sum up, by integrating IT into English lessons the language becomes a means through which to practice other vital skills.

Sometimes the single reason to opt for multimedia or computerised learning tasks is the speed (it is faster), sometimes the possibility of student cooperation or to facilitate checking oneself (e.g. by online dictionaries, Ms Word spelling checker), but the learning goals are actually the same as in a regular lesson. Quite often it is the real language that teachers want their students to investigate by watching videos and movies, reading news. And occasionally it is just good to practice and develop computer skills, like word processing, making PowerPoint presentations, spellchecking, searching for information, or to introduce new useful online tools and programmes, like Crocodoc, Weebly, Kubbu, GoogleDoc, Prezi, etc.

Teachers note that the Internet gives a possibility for a student to go into "real world" and be connected with the tasks life gives them. Moreover, through the Internet students are introduced authentic materials - English in the real world.

Going a bit further from developing students' IT competence the browsing skills should be discussed. Majority of the teachers find the students' ability to find useful information on the web an essential skill. Students are supposed to find extra information (relevant to the current topic), use resources appropriately and draw proper conclusions.

Students practice selecting and summarizing large quantities of information to find the specific bits, keyword searches, technical skills (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Paint etc). It is rather difficult for students to gather adequate and trustworthy materials and students are expected to practice the skill of referencing as well.

Creating PowerPoint presentations seems to be rather favoured task teachers give to their students. First of all students look for information (do some research), analyze the info and make use of it and then prepare a presentation on a certain topic. Lastly students usually present their project in class. Some teachers call this process doing a research, some doing a project.

While working on a project students evolve their skill of critical thinking, ability to find information, they have to plan their work, practice their reading and writing skills and finally so called public speaking follows. A project is a set of interrelated tasks and as students are sitting behind the computers they do not even notice that it is all about studying English and it feels fun for them this way.

Long-term projects support the development of many language learning skills: reading along with translating, writing (PowerPoint presentations or posters etc), speaking (presenting) and why not also listening (watching videos, checking pronunciations). Reading and translating implies that students use a dictionary or dictionaries, either bilingual or monolingual but mostly online dictionaries.

According to the answers it can be said that teachers do not let their students just translate the texts, which is actually a quite boring activity, but reading and understanding the material in a way assumes translating the sentences in our heads. Reading practice itself plays an important role in learning English.

Reading comprehension tasks help students practice new vocabulary and check their understanding, for example, by answering questions, expressing their opinion, making a summary etc. Teachers name the terms like functional reading, critical reading, authentic reading and home reading (the latter is usually followed by a report). Several teachers emphasize that through different reading tasks students learn to be able to differentiate between relevant and irrelevant information. In addition, reading about various topics and authentic materials broadens students' horizon.

The most frequent answers to the question number 14 were grammar and vocabulary practice. In order to form sentences and to communicate, write etc, language learning largely means studying words and phrases but grammar knowledge is vital as well. Vocabulary needs continuous revision (some teachers mentioned Quizlet here) and as

grammar structures are getting more difficult year by year much grammar practice has to be done.

Students can independently deepen their knowledge of grammar on the Internet by doing different grammar exercises online and they can see right away if their answers are correct or not (instant feedback is a huge advantage of web-based grammar revision). Online grammar and vocabulary exercises are meant for further practicing, just in addition to the exercises in students' textbooks and workbooks.

In some English lessons teachers combine various topics, different language structures and skills and attach greater importance to general drilling. Exercises and uploaded tests on the Internet help to prepare for regular tests, level tests or exams and definitely provide additional materials for the students who just need more practice. Moreover, the web offers loads of opportunities to check one's English level and / or any improvements.

Writing is the skill not discussed yet but also quite often referred to in this question and answers. In English computer-based lessons students are supposed to develop their written expression, for instance, by writing semiformal emails (using attachments), biographies, reports, sending a letter to Santa (younger students use an example) and by being an active followers of a blog (blogs) - commenting, sending their own ideas. In secondary level teachers also put emphasis on academic writing skills.

According to the answers teachers do not pay that much attention to students' skill of listening, though some teachers pointed out that students sometimes watch videos (to practice their listening comprehension), listen to different accents and in some English lessons they purely work on their pronunciation.

Question number 15 asks about the internet pages English teachers use in their lessons. There are so many internet addresses named but quite many of them are repeated

several times. It is also important to mention that teachers put down the addresses or the names of the sources they can remember or come up to while filling in the questionnaire and some teachers just write “*different materials*” and do not specify their databases.

The lists of web pages used by English teachers are sorted in the order of popularity. Sites cited only once are left out (except for the list of online dictionaries); otherwise the list would be too long. All the web pages are checked, addresses are correct and they work properly. In addition, it must be said that while comparing the web sources pointed out year by year (in 2012, 2014 and 2016), there are no big differences, and mostly the same internet pages are highlighted.

Here follows the list of web sites that teachers referred to most. First of all the addresses of online dictionaries the English teachers prefer to use in their lessons. All the dictionaries noted in the question are listed and the most favoured is the first one, only once mentioned online dictionary is the last one.

1. <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/learnersdictionary.com>
2. [dictionary.cambridge.org](http://dictionary.cambridge.org)
3. <http://www.macmillandictionary.com>
4. [www.ldoceonline.com](http://www.ldoceonline.com) (Longman English Dictionary Online)
5. [aare.edu.ee/dictionary.html](http://aare.edu.ee/dictionary.html)
6. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com>
7. [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)
8. [www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com)
9. <http://www.merriam-webster.com>
10. [ww1.tomahook.net](http://ww1.tomahook.net)
11. [www.ozdic.com](http://www.ozdic.com)

Other sources (top 12 combined below):

1. Quizlet.com (half of the teachers named this site; vocabulary practice)
2. Youtube.com (the next popular web page; videos connected to some certain topic)
3. www.ego4u.com (grammar practice)
4. www.britishcouncil.com
5. Google.com (the most popular search engine)
6. englishpage.com
7. www.bbc.com (news)
8. learningapps.org
9. www.kahoot.it (a game for testing)
10. www.ted.com
11. www.englisch-hilfen.de (grammar)
12. www.wikipedia.org (searching for information)

There is an abundance of resources available on the web to meet everyone's needs but there are still some teachers who are not that motivated to use the opportunities the Internet offers us.

Question number 15 also gives a general overview of teachers' attitudes and preparation for the computer-based English lessons. There are teachers who tend to use only the web pages that have been advised on courses (web pages not specified). A wide variety of web addresses are given by teachers but plenty are found by students themselves. There are even teachers who never provide students with any specific links

claiming that Internet pages improve constantly and there is no point to focus on any specific pages.

Several teachers explain that their assignments usually involve using Google search (practicing grammar, finding information), not specific sites. Some teachers randomly pick web pages, some have collected them throughout the years, and one teacher said that she has created her own wiki-pages that go with the textbooks she uses. A few teachers have their own homepages (Weebly is mentioned here) or blogs where they insert various links. A couple of teachers mention the learning management system Moodle (having their school's Moodle or one's own Moodle course for different classes, where students can find additional materials and links to websites for further practice).

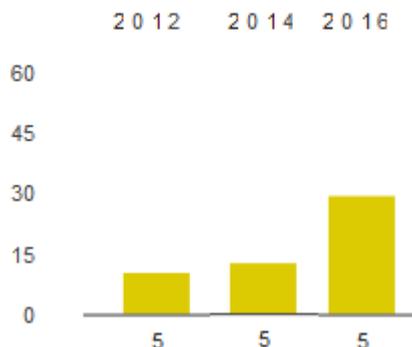
Two teachers claim that they have internet addresses given with tasks in their textbooks and one teacher states that she uses online exercises of the following course books: Opportunities, English Plus.

There are a couple of teachers who prefer to prepare worksheets themselves with the help of Google and then either print them for students or store worksheets in Google Docs. To sum up this point, a motivating saying by an English teacher "*I personally spend a lot time on finding some interesting web pages for my students and I like it*".

The penultimate question (16) in the questionnaire asks to rate the usefulness of web-based learning on the scale from 1 to 5. The charts clearly show that year after year (from 2012 to 2016) English teachers rate web-based learning more and more useful. The percentages of choosing 5 (extremely useful) rise from 9.9% to 22.1%.

**Chart 16. The extremely usefulness (rated as 5) of web-based learning**

**16. How would you rate the usefulness of web-based learning?**

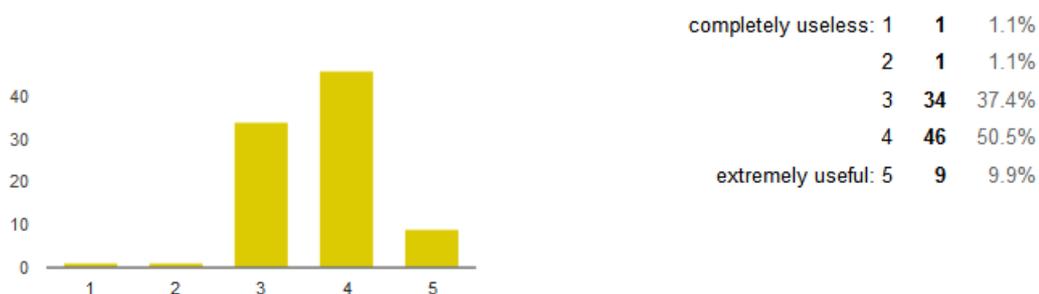


However, most of the teachers (on average 50% of the respondents) classify the efficiency of web-based learning quite useful, not extremely useful. The percentage increased in 2014 (50.5% to 52.4%) but there is a decline in 2016 at this point (44.9%).

About 33% of the teachers chose the option number 3 on the scale – useful, but not particularly useful. And finally, it is a good indicator that only a couple of English teachers marked web-based learning (extremely) useless. In conclusion, the teachers consider web-based learning rather important and necessary.

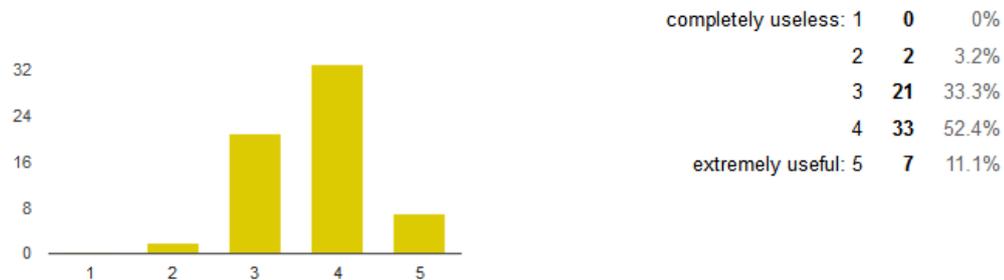
**Chart 17. The usefulness of web-based learning (2012)**

**16. How would you rate the usefulness of web-based learning?**



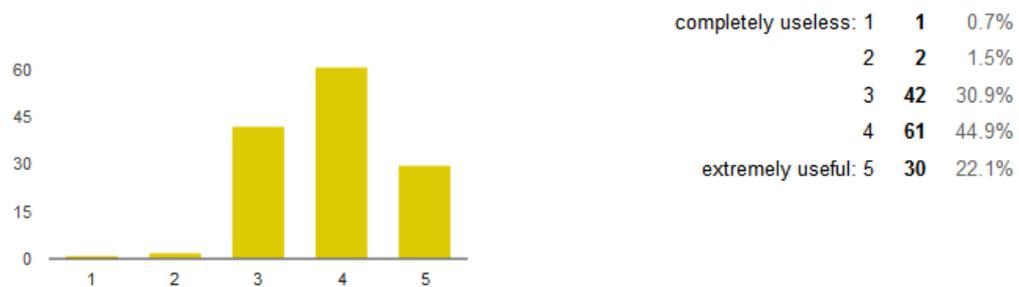
**Chart 18. The usefulness of web-based learning (2014)**

**16. How would you rate the usefulness of web-based learning?**



**Chart 19. The usefulness of web-based learning (2016)**

**16. How would you rate the usefulness of web-based learning?**



Basically the last question (number 17) in the questionnaire asks the teachers to explain why they use or do not use web-based learning in their teaching. First of all the teachers emphasize that the main purpose of web-based learning is to make learning more attractive to students and they believe that studying should be interesting and fun for learners, in addition, web-based learning diversifies lessons and raises students' motivation.

Children nowadays need more interactive learning than they used to. Tablets and smart phones are a part of their everyday lives anyway, so why not use those things in teaching as well. The teachers use web-based learning because Internet, smart phones, tablets, computers etc are a reality that is surrounding us. It is just students' way of living,

communicating with peers and parents, spending time, enjoying videos and games etc. Therefore teachers must learn how to use all these things in their teaching in the best way to reach their students.

Web-based learning is convenient both for teachers and for students (they take it for granted and for them it is more natural), the amount of materials is practically limitless and easy to find. Furthermore, web-based learning is fast and informative. Resources are all around us, there is no point to invent the bicycle. Students hate handouts and they prefer to use computers, tablets or phones, web-based learning is definitely more interesting than usual pen-and-paper work for the kids. Moreover, web-based learning also saves time and paper.

Children like to use computers and they definitely feel like home in computer class. Their learning ability is now different, they like visualizing and they can do several things at a time (listen, write etc). The Internet gives more opportunities to study and memorise the material. Even a short clip from YouTube or History Channel can get them thinking and expressing their ideas quicker and better than just reading/listening texts from the student book. Kids learn better/more eagerly for example vocabulary if the words are in Quizlet and grammar exercises are online.

Apart from developing all language skills and applying language knowledge, web-based learning helps students to acquire general learning skills as well. Also, web-based learning develops ICT skills. There are more advantages of web-based learning, for instance, it gives the students the opportunity to learn independently, so that they can choose their own time, speed, and thoroughness of learning. The Internet provides students with authentic information and brings the English-speaking world closer.

But there are also some negative sides of web-based learning, though it brings variety to the classroom and teachers use it to make their teaching more memorable and

give extra activities, but one should always be aware of the fact that you have to know how to use the web-based tools yourself and that the students use them indeed for the purpose you have chosen for. Preparing web-based materials or courses has to be well thought over, and the students must also have a clear understanding as to why they do certain things online.

Reading teachers' answers to question number 17 then teachers' replies reflect that the majority of teachers feel reasonably positive about web-based learning. Some teachers even admit that it is fun for them too and they learn with students. One of the teachers says: *"I cannot imagine working without any digital tools with present-day learners. This is not only teaching but also learning at the same time"*. But there are still teachers (about 20% of the respondents) who ignore web-based learning and as they do not feel comfortable with web-based activities or believe that web-based learning either takes too much time in class and requires too long preparation.

Some teachers name the main reason of not using web-based learning to be the lack of suitable and proper equipment or the computer classrooms are often unavailable (must be booked long ahead). One more aspect mentioned by teachers is the teacher's work load (web-based learning needs much time for preparing material and also experience).

One of the respondents claims that she (aged 31-35 years) is strongly against increasing students' hours spent in the Internet. In her opinion computer-based education kills creative thinking and imagination; she adds that health problems caused by the computer are not a part of fiction, they are real. Another teacher (51-55 years old) fully concurs and does not think that web-based learning is definitely useful as students spend too much time on the Internet anyway.

The opinions about web-based learning do not depend on the age of the respondents, though it is understandable that some older teachers (aged from 41 to 65

years) say that they have not got enough experience and they are not used to web-based learning, therefore prefer to use other methods of teaching. Likewise it is clear that smaller and county schools are not as well equipped as they would like to be but at least the teachers there are hopeful and ready to use web-based learning as soon as the possibility occurs.

In conclusion, though there were all together three non-believers in web-based learning, the bigger half of the teachers believe that life is becoming more and more web-based every day and web-based learning helps to bring variety and student-chosen content into the classroom, it makes lesson better connected with everyday life and helps to learn about other cultures and widens students horizon.

### ***Conclusion of the results of the questionnaire***

According to the results of the questionnaire English teachers in Estonia do use web-based learning in their lessons, some teachers more, some less, depending on the teacher's computer skills and the equipment he/ she has in one's school. Although questions 7 and 8 in the questionnaire show that most schools are technically very well equipped, there are still some teachers who encounter problems (computer classroom is always booked or overhead projector very often not available etc). Furthermore, several teachers believe that web-based learning needs much preparation. However, many teachers use web-based learning from time to time and combine it with other teaching/ learning methods.

What concerns web-based activities and tasks English teachers in Estonia give to their students then mostly the tasks are connected with the aim(s) of the lesson. Web-based learning offers a larger variety of tasks, for motivation, for fast self-check and feedback

from online vocabulary and grammar tasks, for developing learner autonomy etc. The teachers find the most popular activities to be searching for additional information on the Internet, consolidating grammar knowledge, revising vocabulary, watching videos and using online dictionaries.

All in all, the questionnaire proved that majority of the teachers are positively disposed towards web-based learning and are of the opinion that it is definitely a way of making the lessons fun and more variable and inciting the students' interest in English and other subjects. Furthermore, one cannot deny the fact that it is the fastest way of finding information and there are a lot of good sources available on the net.

Learning and teaching in the 21st century is not as it used to be. Computer-based work is a part of everyday life. The generation that attends school presently is familiar with all sorts of IT devices and feels at ease when faced with a web-based task. It is more difficult for them to concentrate on learning from a textbook. Therefore, to make the teacher's work more convenient and effective, it is a good idea to use web-based learning now and again.

### ***The interview***

As mentioned before five English teachers were interviewed for this master's thesis. The interviewees are from several schools of Tartu, three of them are primary school teachers and two teachers are basic school teachers. The teachers are from various age groups and with diverse working experience. In order to get a clearer overview of the interviews' results the interviewees are hereinafter named as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D and Teacher E.

The aim of the interview was to get a more in depth picture about web-based learning and teaching in English lessons among English teachers in Tartu. The questions (13) for the interview were preconcerted and the interviews were carried out by the author of the thesis in March 2016. During the interviews some specifying questions were asked, if necessary, and the answers were put down by the author of the thesis. The interviews lasted on average about 30 minutes and were mainly carried on in English, with the exception of Teacher B (in Estonian). The interviewees were promised not to mention their names and other data that might imply to their identity.

The first question is a general question and asks the teachers' opinion about web-based learning. All five teachers are well disposed to web-based learning. They think it is useful, effective and motivating. Web-based learning is an important part of learning in the 21st century and it makes teaching and learning easier and more contemporary. Furthermore, it helps to develop students' digital competence. At the same time, Teacher A points out that she does not like to use it very much and Teacher B believes that there is not enough equipment to successfully integrate web-based learning to teaching. The latter also draws attention to students' health and emphasizes that methods should be varied.

Secondly, the use of web-based learning was discussed. Teacher D expresses her like towards web-based learning and claims that there are so many different exercises and it is fun learning for kids, moreover it makes English lessons and learning interesting. Teacher B does not use the Internet sources that much as she lacks the opportunities and equipment.

Teacher C gives here fairly longer answer and explains that she uses web-based learning to motivate her students, to make them learn or revise something, to integrate English with other subjects (projects) and to develop her students' digital competence. In addition, she names the activities she predominantly prefers: look for additional

information, practice grammar and vocabulary, watch videos, make puzzles/crosswords and solve them, make mind maps, use online dictionaries, answer questionnaires and quizzes.

Likewise, teacher A confirms that she uses the options of the web every now and then and mostly to find some additional material and to make learning in the classroom more interesting but she also indicates that learning a language does not only mean surfing on the Internet, it also means communication and discussions and so on. Teacher E concludes that she uses web-based learning because it helps students to learn more easily and they want to learn this way. In all, teachers definitely use web-based learning, who more who less.

The third question asked about teachers' opinion about the changes that have occurred in teaching and/or learning during these last years what concerns computer-based and internet-based learning. Teachers confirm in full that web-based learning has undergone some changes, for example, in general, more interesting possibilities have emerged (there are a lot of web pages and apps for language learning), internet-based learning is used more often, dictionaries in book form have been replaced by online dictionaries. Teacher E adds that there are a lot more possibilities in schools to use web-based learning: more computer classes and tablets in schools. Teacher D includes that kids use internet a lot and they like web-based learning.

Question number 4 is: can nowadays a teacher just work with the textbook and workbook? Teacher A, C and D believe that it would be boring and would not be that exciting for the students if teachers used for teaching only textbooks and workbooks, Teacher E continues that the school, the students and their parents would just demand web-based learning as it is a contemporary way of teaching and learning. However, Teacher B

argues that students can work only with the textbook and workbook as communication still remains and it is vital as well.

Continuing with the question number 5 about extra materials, sources and devices, it is clear that teachers need one or the other, for instance, Teacher A finds that a teacher might have an interactive board, the possibility of using laptops and small boards daily in the classroom. From electronic devices Teacher B also mentions tablets (though mainly for self-assessment) but being a primary school English teacher she considers visual aids more important in a lesson.

Teacher E promotes the idea that a teacher should have a computer in his/ her classroom. Furthermore, she proposes that students can bring their own device (BYOD) to school and adds that teachers should look for new sources and materials from time to time. Teachers C and D answer the question affirmatively and give the following reason if the teacher wants to make learning fun and interesting then no question, she has to use extra materials, sources and devices.

Question number 6 aims at specifying what kind of web-based sources teachers usually use in their teaching. Online grammar exercises and quizzes were pointed out here, but the most general reply was just to find extra information, new apps, web pages and tools.

The most popular web pages used (question number 7) were YouTube (for listening and/ or watching videos), Quizlet (for learning vocabulary), Kahoot (for revision), [agendaweb.org](http://agendaweb.org) and [learningapps.com](http://learningapps.com). Additionally Wikipedia, Quizizz, [koolielu.ee](http://koolielu.ee), [englisch-hilfen.de](http://englisch-hilfen.de), [englishexercises.org](http://englishexercises.org) and British Council materials were named.

Teacher C provided a long and detailed reply to this question, her favourite Internet pages are: [www.ego4u.com](http://www.ego4u.com) (grammar theory and exercises), [www.learningapps.org](http://www.learningapps.org) (possibility to make different kinds of tasks that students are eager to solve),

www.getkahoot.com (very good place to make quizzes and use them in lessons), www.answer garden.ch (to get feedback or just for brainstorming), www.mindomo.com (to create the best looking mind maps together or alone).

Question number 8 examined the textbooks and workbooks the teachers use at the moment. Teacher A replied that she uses Step by Step and Prime Time. Teacher B and D teach with the help of I Love English materials. Teacher C responded that she is working with I Love English (forms 6, 7 and 8) and Gold (form 9). Teacher E has the following textbooks and workbooks: I love English 1, Excellent 1, English step by step 2. Thus, I Love English is used in several schools and the other textbook series are different. How these textbooks support web-based learning (are there references to websites, exercises that encourage students to use web materials, etc) is examined in question number 10.

The consequent question (9) specified the teachers' opinions about the teaching materials they use (if the textbooks and workbooks are up-to-date). According to the given answers the teachers are mostly satisfied with the materials (having renewed editions) they have to use. Whereas Teacher A says that it is quite possible to use them but certainly there could be better ones and Teacher C notes that if her school had more money, she would probably find something new for the 8th formers. Teacher E thinks that from three textbooks she mentioned the last one is out-of-date (English Step by Step 2).

Succeeding with the discussion whether the textbooks have tasks that, for example, ask to use the Internet to find more information about the topic, advise to practice grammar online or give some extra work suggesting to use computers or other electronic devices. Teacher A responded that she has not noticed anything about grammar in the textbooks she uses but some project works include advice for the students to find out information on their own and make the presentations. Teacher C states that I Love English series has some web-based tasks but she is not sure about Gold. She adds that she tries to find these kinds of

tasks herself and furthermore, praises the interactive CD of Gold. Teachers B, C and E (primary school teachers) answered clearly no to this (number 10) question, their textbooks do not promote web-based learning.

The next topic discussed was about post task activities. Teacher C suggests that it could be any activity really depending on the task they do using the Internet, it could be a presentation, completing/ making a mind map, answering a questionnaire, role play, cartoon etc. Teacher A promotes presentations as well, and adds tests and discussions.

Teachers B, D and E find it important to talk through everything, speak about what students have learned and what they remember. Furthermore, they emphasize feedback by finding out if students have learned the topic or not and additionally would like to know whether the tasks were suitable and challenging. Teacher D also includes group work to the list of post task activities.

Question number 12 observed whether the teachers prefer individual or group work regarding web-based learning. Teachers A, D and E like better individual work but depending on the task it can also be a group task. However, Teachers B and C do both devolving on the aim of the task.

The last question (13) of the interview asked what the teachers do to avoid students just copying materials while studying or working online. Teacher A says that students have to know all the meanings of the words and the pronunciation as well. They also have to change the sentences shorter and easy to be understood. Teacher C refers to the same point as Teacher A that students have to make their work as simple as possible in order to present it. Teacher B claims that there is no problem like that in primary school and referencing will be taught as soon as the need is noticed. Another primary school teacher, Teacher D agrees and notes that they mostly do grammar exercises and quizzes and they are online - so students do not need to copy anything.

### ***Conclusion of the results of the interview***

All the teachers interviewed held a rather high opinion of web-based learning, they feel that it is convenient, motivating and a contemporary way of teaching and learning, moreover, it provides diversity and a happy learning environment. The teachers admit that working with a student book or workbook alone gets boring and students want to show off their computer literacy skills as well. None of the teachers complained about one's lack of facilities or skills and condemned the web-based teaching for being time-consuming.

The primary school teachers seem to use web-based learning slightly less and they concentrate more on varying teaching methods, singing and playing games with students in classrooms, though sometimes web-based learning helps to get out of the every-day routine. As children are nowadays used to computers and the Internet, it is rather exciting for them to learn a foreign language online as well.

The question about the teaching materials (textbooks, workbooks) assures that the teachers are principally satisfied with the textbooks they have and whenever they need some additional materials they can find them on the Internet. The Internet offers loads of materials and teaching ideas and gives the students the opportunity to practise grammar online (for example, by playing grammar games), learn new vocabulary, in addition, web-based learning teaches students how to find the necessary information and how to make PowerPoint presentations. By practising grammar or vocabulary online students can check themselves -- teaches learner autonomy and several web pages also give instant feedback. Feedback is something teachers encounter fairly significant in modern teaching and learning process.

Teachers acknowledge in full that web-based learning adds more colour into the learning process, furthermore, it is self-paced and individualised learning that gives

immediate feedback for the pupils and the teacher. The fact is that life changes and the Internet provides us with appealing materials and content, so web-based learning can be the best way to get students into learning process.

## CONCLUSION

Many things in the world and web-based learning as well, have their pros and cons, but we have to accept the fact that the Internet and web-based learning are here to stay and are firmly anchoring in Estonian society and more specifically in Estonian educational system. It is not a question of whether to use web-based learning or not anymore, but it is more a question of “how (much)” and “when”.

No doubt that the web is an increasingly used learning tool that serves as a valuable source of information and teachers should use the potential of the web to support students’ learning and give the students opportunities to make the Internet useful for them in order to increase their knowledge and develop their technological aptness.

As nowadays students have become friends with the Internet it is a good way to use teaching methods that are more interesting and attractive to them. Moreover, it is a simple way to get away from textbooks and web-based learning offers something refreshing if the children are already tired or a nice way to start a lesson. Additionally, today not all students are able to learn from books only, so teachers have to vary their teaching methods and take into account students’ different abilities and put more emphasis on student-based learning.

The results of the questionnaire and the interviews indicated that the English teachers in Estonia now and again use web-based learning and the tasks they give to their students are rather diverse. Although there were teachers who claimed themselves not to be good at computering and some teachers who complained about limited access to the computer class or the lack of abilities to use web-based learning, still most of the teachers think it is reasonable to embrace language learning with IT skills.

The positive sides of the web-based learning mentioned by English teachers were: a good change for traditional classroom teaching and learning, students are more eager to do web-based tasks and like interactive work, self-paced and individualised learning, immediate feedback for the pupils and the teacher, appealing materials and content, easier to get to the goal sometimes etc. Contrasting with some more disadvantages of web-based learning the teachers referred to, for example, the time factor (preparation), not having up-to-date technology or the belief that students speak and communicate orally too little and they do not want to write either and the teachers prefer active learning and interaction.

However, in the opinion of the majority of English teachers in Estonia there are definitely more advantages of web-based learning and teachers' task is to show different possibilities and opportunities to learn the language on the Internet, all the students need for improving their language skills is available online. One of the teachers even noted that web-based learning is a normal part of teaching, not anything special anymore, as it is a normal part of students' lives.

The second research question of the thesis sought the answer to the question what kind of web-based activities the English teachers in Estonia give to their students in English lessons. Predominant replies were to learn and practise grammar or vocabulary online (for instance, by playing), to find the necessary information, to make PowerPoint presentations and to watch videos (giving the examples of real life language use). Furthermore, reading tasks and working with online dictionaries were pointed out by the teachers as well.

Independent work or group tasks make students more responsible for their own learning and students are given the opportunity to look for some information or help by themselves and so they inconspicuously use computers and the Internet for educational purposes.

Computer-based work is a part of everyday life, it is the world students live currently in and teachers should take the most of it to reach the goals they have set. Web-based learning enriches the learning process, makes students interested in the process of studying and arouses students' interest in learning English. It is important to see which amazing possibilities the Internet and computerisation of the world gives at large. Nevertheless, web-based learning is a powerful tool and it should be used wisely.

Nevertheless, the final decision regarding the use of web-based learning, about how to teach a lesson and what methods to use, is up to a teacher but a modern teacher should keep up with the times and "a good start is half the work".

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**Appendix 1****Questionnaire**

I am doing some research for my master's thesis on the topic of web-based learning and I would appreciate your help in this, it will take about 10 minutes.

1. How old are you? .....
2. How long have you been teaching English? ..... years
3. What is the name of the school where you teach English?  
.....
4. How many students are there in your school? .....
5. In what grades do you teach English?  
.....
6. What kind of technical equipment do you have in your classroom?  
computer/ stereo player/ overhead projector/ smart board/ TV/ printer/ scanner  
/.....
7. Do you have computer classrooms in your school? yes / no
8. How many computer-classes do you have in your school? .....
9. Do you have to book the classroom in advance? yes / no
10. How often do you use web-based learning with your students in your English  
classes?  
..... every day  
..... several times a week  
..... once a week

..... 2 or 3 times a month

..... once a month

..... once in a term

..... 2 or 3 times a year

.....

11. What kind of web-based activities (tasks) do you give to your students?

..... looking for information (+ PP presentations)

..... practicing grammar

..... reading, translating

..... vocabulary revision/learning

..... watching videos

..... completing worksheets

..... doing WebQuests

..... testing

..... making puzzles, solving them (+ crosswords)

..... using online dictionaries

..... doing project work

.....

12. Do you use the Internet for preparing your own English lessons? yes/ no

and on what specific purposes?

.....

13. What do the students suppose to learn/ practise through these tasks?

.....

.....

14. What internet pages do you give to your students to work with? (Internet addresses you have used most)

.....  
.....  
.....

15. What do you think about web-based learning?

.....  
.....  
.....

16. How would you rate the usefulness of web-based learning?

1 2 3 4 5

17. Why do you use or do not use web-based learning in your teaching?

.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for sparing some time to fill in this questionnaire.

Monika Aviste

OU MA 2<sup>nd</sup> year

**Appendix 2****Interview**

1. What do you think about web-based learning?
2. Why do you use or do not use web-based learning in your teaching?
3. What is your opinion, has anything changed in teaching and/or learning during these last years what concerns computer-based and internet-based learning?
4. Can nowadays a teacher just work with the textbook and workbook?
5. Does a teacher need some extra materials, sources and devices to make teaching and learning easier for students and more contemporary?
6. What kind of web-based sources do you usually use in your teaching?
7. What are your favourite Internet pages you use in your English classroom and why?
8. What textbooks and workbooks do you use with your students?
9. Do you think that these teaching materials are up-to-date?
10. Do they have tasks that, for example, ask to use the Internet to find more information about the topic, advice to practice grammar online or give some extra work suggesting to use computers or other electronic devices?
11. What do you usually do after using the Internet (post task activities)?
12. Do you prefer individual or group work regarding web-based learning?
13. What do you do to avoid students just copying materials?

**Appendix 3****The list of web pages the English teachers in Estonia use in their English lessons**

Online dictionaries:

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/learnersdictionary.com>

[dictionary.cambridge.org](http://dictionary.cambridge.org)

<http://www.macmillandictionary.com>

[www.ldoceonline.com](http://www.ldoceonline.com) (Longman English Dictionary Online)

[aare.edu.ee/dictionary.html](http://aare.edu.ee/dictionary.html)

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com>

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

[www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com)

<http://www.merriam-webster.com>

[ww1.tomahook.net](http://ww1.tomahook.net)

Other web pages:

[Quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com) (half of the teachers named this site; vocabulary practice)

[Youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) (the next popular web page; videos connected to some certain topic)

[www.ego4u.com](http://www.ego4u.com) (grammar practice)

[www.britishcouncil.com](http://www.britishcouncil.com)

Google.com (the most popular search engine)

englishpage.com

www.bbc.com (news)

learningapps.org

www.kahoot.it (a game for testing)

www.ted.com

www.englisch-hilfen.de (grammar)

www.wikipedia.org (searching for information)

www.agendaweb.com

www.puzzlemaker.com

learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/

onestopenglish.com

padlet.com (to share ideas and writing)

www.miksike.ee

eslgamesworld.com

www.english-4u.de

www.englishexercises.org

www.projectbritain.com

global.oup.com

englishteststore.net

www.pbworks.com

www.perfect-english-grammar.com

quizizz.com (quiz games)

koolielu.ee

www.englishclub.com

[learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org](http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org)

[www.keeleveeb.ee](http://www.keeleveeb.ee)

[www.socrative.com](http://www.socrative.com) (testing environment)

[www.esl-lab.com](http://www.esl-lab.com)

[a4esl.org](http://a4esl.org)

[www.englishclub.com](http://www.englishclub.com)

[plickers.com](http://plickers.com)

[www.memrise.com](http://www.memrise.com)

[www.weebly.com](http://www.weebly.com)

[www.classmarker.com](http://www.classmarker.com)

[www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com)

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu>

[www.slideshare.net](http://www.slideshare.net)

[www.innove.ee](http://www.innove.ee)

[www.eslgamesplus.com](http://www.eslgamesplus.com)

<http://www.englishspeak.com/english-lessons.cfm>

Moodle

[www.superteachertools.us](http://www.superteachertools.us)

[www.usingenglish.com](http://www.usingenglish.com)

[spellic.com](http://spellic.com)

[www.manythings.org](http://www.manythings.org)

[www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)

[busyteacher.org](http://busyteacher.org)

[jeopardylabs.com](http://jeopardylabs.com)

[www.tolearnenglish.com](http://www.tolearnenglish.com)

[www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com)

[www.classtools.net](http://www.classtools.net)

[www.koolibri.ee](http://www.koolibri.ee)

[www.flo-joe.co.uk](http://www.flo-joe.co.uk)

[www.usingenglish.com](http://www.usingenglish.com)

[www.learnenglishfeelgood.com](http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com)

[www.englishgrammarssecrets.com](http://www.englishgrammarssecrets.com)

[www.mes-english.com](http://www.mes-english.com)

[www.tolearnenglish.com](http://www.tolearnenglish.com)

## RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL INGLISE FILOLOOGIA OSAKOND

**Monika Aviste**

**The use of web-based learning among English teachers in Estonia/**

**Arvutipõhise õppimise kasutus Eesti inglise keele õpetajate hulgas.**

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Annotatsioon:

Käesolevas magistritöös uuritakse meetodeid ja ideesid, mis on seotud veebipõhise õppimisega. Kuna 21. sajand on tehnikasajand siis soovitatakse ka koolides kasutada arvuteid kui õppevahendeid ja infoallikaid. Arvan, et õpetaja töö on teha oma tunnid huvitavaks pakkudes õpilastele mitmesuguseid õppeülesandeid ja vahelduvaid tegevusi. Internet varustab õpetajaid suure hulga õppematerjalidega, mida on kahju kasutamata jätta. Uurimustöö eesmärgiks on teada saada, kas ja kui palju kasutatakse veebipõhist õppimist ning anda ülevaade allikatest, mida õpetajad oma tundide mitmekesistamiseks või lisamaterjalina kasutavad. Küsimustik saadeti inglise keele õpetajale üle eesti meililistide kaudu. Püüdsin küsimustikuga panna keeleõpetajaid mõtlema tehnoloogia ja veebi võimaluste üle ning tulemina koostada nimekiri veebilinkidest, mida inglise keele õpetajad välja tõid. Lisaks viidi läbi ka viis intervjuud Tartu koolide õpetajatega, eesmärgiga minna rohkem detailidesse veebipõhise õppimise teemal. Magistritöö on üles ehitatud järgnevalt: alguses on sissejuhatav osa veebipõhisesse õppimisse, kus selgitatakse lahti ka veebipõhise õppimise mõiste ning antakse ülevaade spetsialistide arvamustest selle õppimisviisi kohta, järgneb natuke detailsem kirjeldus keeleõppe seisukohast, mis sisaldab põhjendusi, miks

on veebipõhine õppimine keeleõppes otstarbekas ja milliseid oskusi saab internetis treenida läbi erinevate õppeülesannete. Seejärel tutvustan oma uurimuse eesmäärke, metoodikat ning tulemusi ning viimasena võtan töö kokku ja teen järeldused kokkuvõttes. Küsimustikust ja intervjuudest selgus, et paljud õpetajad Eestis kasutavad inglise keelt õpetades arvuti ja interneti abi. Materjale, mida kasutatakse on palju, treenimaks erinevaid keele omandamise oskusi, kuid siiski mitmed allikad ehk veebilehed, mida inglise keele õpetajad kasutavad, korduvad. Kokkuvõtvalt võib öelda, et keele õpetajad näevad veebipõhises õppimises potentsiaali ja mõistavad, et laste huve, individuaalsust ja kiiret tehnika arengut arvestades, tuleb järjest rohkem kasutada veebipõhise õppimise ja õpetamise võimalusi.

Märksõnad: inglise keel, arvutipõhine (keele) õppimine, õpetaja, õpilane, huviäratamine, mitmekesisus, metoodika, keeletund, tehnika, IT vahendid, internet.

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